

REMARKS

Claims 12 and 17-20 have been canceled, without prejudice. Claims 1-11 and 13-16 are currently pending. These claims stood rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in accordance with a Final Rejection mailed on January 3, 2007. Applicants appealed this rejection via a Notice of Appeal submitted on March 28, 2007 and Appeal Brief submitted on April 13, 2007.

The Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences rendered its decision on appeal on March 29, 2008. The Board affirmed the Section 103 rejection with respect to claims 1-7, 9-11, and 13-16, but designated the affirmance under a new ground of rejection. The Board reversed the Section 103 rejection with respect to claims 8 and 12. In accordance with the Board's decision (*see* page 10) and 37 CFR § 41.50(b), Applicants are submitting this amendment to reopen prosecution. Applicants have amended independent claim 1 by incorporating the features recited in original claim 12. And Applicants have rewritten original claim 8 in independent form and to include all of the feature of the base claim. These amendments obviate the new ground of rejection and are believed to place the application in condition for allowance. Confirmation of the same is requested through the issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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